

Sifaat

Sifaat are qualities, or descriptions of each Arabic letters. Every letter has a Makhraj and some Sifaat (descriptions / characteristics). So Sifaat are all about “how a letter is pronounced” instead of “where the letter is pronounced from”

For example, the Makhraj of the letter ح is the middle of the throat and one of its Sifaat is that it's Empty Mouthed. Meaning it is pronounced lightly with your mouth looking empty and sounding empty.

In this course we will study **two types of Sifaat**:

1. Mutadaaddah (مُتَضَادَّة) – the qualities which have an opposite.
Mutadaaddah have five pairs. Each pairs is opposite to its partner. From each pair, the two qualities can't be found together in any letter.
2. Ghair Mutadaaddah (غَيْرُ مُتَضَادَّة) – the qualities which don't have any opposites.

The **Mutadaaddah** qualities (Sifaat) **are ten**:

1. Hams (هَمْز)
2. Jahr (جَهْر)
3. Shiddah (شِدَّة)
4. Rikhwah (رِخْوَة)

5. Isti'laa (إِسْتِعْلَاء)
6. Istifaal (إِسْتِفَال)
7. Itbaaq (إِطْبَاق)
8. Infitaah (إِنْفِتَاح)
9. Izlaaq (إِذْلَاق)
10. Ismaat (إِصْمَات)

1. Hams (هَمْز) – this is the first Mutadaaddah Sifah (quality). So it has an opposite which is Jahr.

Hams means that when the sound of the letter ends; it ends low in volume. Also it is possible to make this Hams sound continue and flowing with the breath.

An example is the word – يَلَهُتْ –. The sound of Thaa ends very low because you pronounce it with the tip of your tongue. Also it is possible to continue and flow the sound of Thaa by saying “ttthhh”.

There are 10 letters of Hams. They are:

ف ح ث ه ش خ ص س ك ت

An easy way to remember these letters is in these three words:

فَحْتَهُ شَخْصٌ سَكْتُ

2. Jahr (جَهْر) – Jahr means that when the letter ends, it will end high in volume. Also when the letter ends, it's not possible to continue the sound because the breath will stop.

For example the Hamza in - سَمَاءٌ - the sound of the Hamza ends high and clear in volume. Also it's impossible to drag and continue the sound of the Hamza.

The letters of Jahr are; all the letters beside فَحْتُهُ شَخْصٌ سَكَّتْ (the letters of Hams).

3. Shiddah (شِدَّة) – means that the sound of the letter will be strong and firm. Also the sound will end off with the Makhraj of the letter and not flow or continue.

For example the letter Daal in - أَحَدٌ - the sound of the Daal will be strong and firm. Also the sound of Daal will end off right after it is pronounced.

There are 8 letters of Shiddah. They are:

ا ج د ق ط ب ك ت

An easy way to remember these letters is in these three words:

أَجْدُ قَطٌّ بَكْتُ

The opposite of this quality (Shiddah) is Rikhwah.

4. Rikhwah (رِخْوَةٌ) – means that the sound of this letter will be soft and movable. Also the sound can be made to flow or continue in its Makhraj.

For example the letter Sheen in – مَعَايِشْ – the sound of the Sheen is soft and movable. Also it is possible to flow its sound from its Makhraj.

In between the strength of Shiddah and softness of Rikhwah, there is another quality called Tawassut.

There are five letters of Tawassut. They are:

ل ن ع م ر

We can say them in words like this. لِنْ عُمَرُ

Besides the 8 letters of Shiddah and 5 letters of Tawassut, the rest of the letters are letters of Rikhwah.

5. Isti'laa (إِسْتِعْلَاءٌ) – means that the sound of the letter will sound full and heavy, with most of the tongue from the back rising towards the palate.
For example the Khaa in – خَلَقَ – the sound of Khaa will be heavy and full mouthed by raising the back of the tongue towards the top of the mouth (the palate).

There are 7 letters of Isti'laa. They are:

خ ص ض غ ط ق ظ

In words we can say:

خُصَّ ضَغُطٌ قِظٌ

The opposite of Isti'laa is Istifaaal.

6. Istifaal (إِسْتِفَال) – means that the sound of the letter will be empty and light, with most of the tongue from the back not rising towards the palate. *For example the Zaal in - أَعُوذُ – the sound of Zaal will be light and empty by not raising most of the tongue from the back towards the palate.*

The letters of Istifaal are all the letters besides the ones of Isti'laa.

7. Itbaaq (إِطْبَاق) – means that the center of the tongue will meet and cover the top of the mouth when saying this letter. *For example the Twaa in - صِرَاط - the sound of the Twaa will pronounced by making the center of the tongue meet the palate.*

There are 4 letters of Itbaaq. They are:

ص ض ط ظ

The opposite of Itbaaq is Infitaah.

8. Infitaah (إِنْفِتَاح) – means that the center of the tongue will not meet and cover the palate when saying this letter.

For example the Hamza¹ in the beginning of - الْحَمْدُ – the sound of the Hamza will be pronounced without the center of the tongue meeting or covering the top of the mouth.

The letters of Infitaah are all the letters besides the ones of Itbaaq.

¹ Any Alif that has a Fatha, Kasrah or Dhammah is called a Hamza.

9. Izlaaq (إِذْلَاق) - means that the letters in their Makhraj are pronounced quickly and swiftly. *For example the Meem at the end of - عَلَيْهِمُ - the sound of the Meem is pronounced quickly and moves on swiftly.*

There are 6 letters of Izlaaq. They are:

ف ر م ن ل ب

The opposite of Izlaaq is Ismaat.

10. Ismaat (إِسْمَات) – means that the letters in their Makhraj will be pronounced slowly and firmly. For example the letter Dwaad in - ضَالِّينَ - the sound of the Dwaad will be pronounced slowly and firmly without moving off quickly.

The letters of Ismaat are all of the letters beside the ones of Izlaaq.